

London Calling

A 1960s Calgary bungalow grows into a Euro-inspired multilevel showpiece.

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“Enter this now two-storey, five-bedroom house, and you’d never guess it used to be a 1960s bungalow,” says designer Stephanie Charest, who was tasked with taking the family home to the next level, literally. “These homeowners had such a clear vision,” she says. They wanted lots of space to share with their two teens (hence, the new second storey); lots of function in a great big chef’s kitchen; and lots of fun finishes and colour. “The client had saved pages from British decorating magazines and had developed an appreciation for a London townhouse vibe – a deep, richly colourful and cozy palette,” says Stephanie, who opted for gemstone shades, like the living room’s dark green walls and plum sofa. Throughout the home, furnishings are urbane yet casual, cosmopolitan yet cozy. The result is a world away from the one-time nondescript bungalow. Now the home is a one-of-a-kind showpiece that balances grownup refinement with family-friendly spaces that ensure everyone has room to grow.



BELOW “We knew from the beginning that this wonderful work of art would hang right here,” says Stephanie, referring to the large floral that has pride of place in the dining room. The bar’s rich jewel-toned blue tile backsplash speaks to the kitchen cabinetry and echoes the blues in painting. A white oak table glows at night under shapely cast-canvas pendants. Says Stephanie, “I’d seen the lights in a bar in Tofino and just knew we had to have them!”

PENDANT LIGHTS, Bocci. Custom **TABLE**, Stephanie Charest Interior Design; fabrication, Out of the Woodwork. **TILE**, Centura. **BAR MILLWORK**, Stephanie Charest Interior Design; fabrication, D&D Contracting Calgary.

OPPOSITE A towering entry with a deep sapphire bench and a wool runner announces the townhouse-inspired interior. “The dark jade cabinets bring more of a library built-in look, even though they’re just hiding coats and boots,” says designer Stephanie Charest. “To top off the space, we hung a lighthearted chandelier.” Its glass orbs mimic the mirror frame’s motif.

DESIGN, Stephanie Charest Interior Design. **CHANDELIER**, Robinson Lighting & Bath. **MIRROR**, CF Interiors. **BENCH**, Crate and Barrel. **MILLWORK PAINT**, Salamander 2050-10, Benjamin Moore. **RUNNER**, Colin Campbell.

ABOVE “The footprint of the kitchen was raised, so messes are never visible from the dining area, which is a few steps down,” says Stephanie. The home’s white oak flooring has plenty of knots, a detail that imbues the home with a sense of age and character.



LEFT The double-faced fireplace opens to both the kitchen and the family room, says Stephanie. "To give the stone a European look, it's finished in a German schmear technique. A thin coat of mortar was applied to the stone, then wiped off, leaving behind a slightly whitewashed texture," explains Stephanie. The kitchen millwork is the same style as the entryway cabinets.

FIREPLACE STONEWORK, Rocky Mountain Stone Supply. **MILLWORK STAIN**, Dark Night SW 6237, Sherwin-Williams.

BELOW & OPPOSITE The husband once worked in the culinary industry, so this kitchen had to meet his high standards for both functionality and entertaining. The massive island delivers. Cabinetry in a deep blue colour was on the homeowners' wish list. "To make it elegant and old world, we went with stained wood - not painted - so you still see the grain," says Stephanie. The counter stools have pale-jade seats and gem-checked backs. For illumination, a parade of sea-urchin-shaped pendants dangle above the huge island.

COUNTER STOOLS, Van Gogh Designs. **COUNTER STOOL BACK FABRIC**, Zinc Textile. **ISLAND COUNTERTOP**, Onyx Stones. **PENDANT LIGHTS**, LightForm.

"Wondering how we came up with this home's colour palette? It was derived directly from that checkered fabric on the backs of the counter stools!"



RIGHT The powder room is true to the home's celebration of blues and greens. "I love how its motifs are bold, yet wonderfully pretty at the same time," says Stephanie. "We upped the impact in this room with a deep, dark quartz lava countertop." Cylinder-shaped scones are a linear foil to the botanical print.

Asa Blue Whimsical Trail **WALLPAPER**, Brewster Wall Covering. Facet **SCONCES**, Hinkley. **MIRROR**, West Elm.



“I’m not going to lie. We wondered, ‘Is this ceiling fixture too big?’ But its shape is so interesting, and because it’s airy and fluid, it highlights the tray ceiling so beautifully.”



RIGHT The main living area is welcoming, warm and delightfully hue positive, with deep green walls reminiscent of the layered and colourful look of a London townhouse. “You just can’t miss a purply amethyst sofa,” says Stephanie. “It was such fun to work with homeowners who aren’t afraid of colour!” Everything in this space is comfort forward and flexible, like the ottoman with a tabletop that can be lifted off and used wherever it’s needed.

Charlotte **SOFA**, Van Gogh Designs. Vertigo **SUSPENSION LIGHT**, LightForm. Hunter **OTTOMAN/COFFEE TABLE**, Marc Antonio Designs. **RUG**, Colin Campbell. **ARMCHAIRS**, CF Interiors.

THESE PAGES “This space is wonderfully large, so you can really experience the impact of the home’s black casement windows,” says Stephanie, which, she explains, are high and traditional, and capture the look of older European architecture. She lavished a little extra love on the ceiling. “The tray ceiling is a way to layer the depth of the ceiling, so that the higher section at the centre is accentuated by the lower perimeter,” says Stephanie. “This creates a frame for that expressive light fixture.”

WALL PAINT, Benjamin Moore.



ABOVE On the living room side of the fireplace, swivel chairs in a subtle leopard print make it easy to turn one’s attention to the outdoors. “We made sure that the chairs throughout the living room were covered in natural tones, then used the pillow colours and the wall of dark millwork to ground the look,” says Stephanie. A TV tucked into the bespoke cabinetry means this room is for family living, as well as entertaining.

SWIVEL CHAIRS, Cricklewood Interiors.



BELOW “I like to say the daughter has the best bedroom in the house because its huge windows overlook the backyard,” says Stephanie. “We designed that window seat so she could make the most of the view.” The room’s furnishings, drapes and wool rug are intentionally neutral. “We wanted her to be able to choose accents in any colour she likes, then change her mind without changing the furniture,” says Stephanie. “That same logic was used for the shelving unit near the bed. She can create displays, then change them on a whim.”

Custom **WINDOW SEAT**, Stephanie Charest Interior Design. **BED**, Van Gogh Designs. **CHAIR, OTTOMAN**, Kit Interior Objects. **RUG**, CB2. **DISPLAY SHELF CABINET**, Article.

RIGHT The daughter loves her designer chair and matching ottoman. It’s not unusual to find her curled up there, drawing. An integrated bookshelf in the upholstered window seat ensures reading materials are at hand. Cozy fabric and cushions make the window seat an inviting spot to lounge in the sun.



“This wallpaper is the most stunning printed grasscloth! Gorgeous! The homeowner saw it on our Instagram and fell in love. I’m so glad she wanted to use it!”



ABOVE The homeowners wanted the primary bedroom to be on its own floor for a retreat-like feeling, and so it’s located on the main floor. “When they retire at night, it’s to this very serene space. Accents like the crystal chandelier make it feel relaxed yet elegant,” says Stephanie. The homeowners were committed to finding nightstands that were Canadian made, and these ones, from Quebec-based Huppé, are a fitting and stylish choice.

CHANDELIER, Robinson Lighting & Bath. Huppé’s Winston **NIGHTSTANDS**, CF Interiors.

RIGHT The watercolour effect of the water lilies wallpaper gives the flowers a see-through quality that lends a faraway, dreamy feeling to the room. To encourage winding-down time in bed, Stephanie chose swing-arm sconces that are perfect for adjusting when reading.

WALLPAPER, Maxwell Fabrics. **SCONCES**, Robinson Lighting & Bath.





LEFT “When I first saw this back-splash tile - it’s a capsule-shaped mosaic - I knew it was a winner, so I ran it right up the wall in the primary ensuite,” says Stephanie. “Seeing it with the white oak vanity and those mirrors is such a pleasure, especially when the sconces are on. They are alabaster and they have such a soft glow, like moonlight.”

VANITY, Stephanie Charest Interior Design; fabrication, D&D Contracting Calgary. **WALL TILE**, Tierra Sol Ceramic Tile.

BELOW Natural light streaming in through the black casement windows keeps the primary ensuite delightfully daytime bright. When evening soak time rolls around and sinking into that super-deep tub is irresistible, the European-inspired sconces can be dimmed for a serene, candle-like illumination.

TUB, Maax. **SCONCES**, Robinson Lighting & Bath.



“While the primary ensuite is a study in serenity, the teens’ bathroom is deliberately fun, bold and colourful.”

LEFT This bathroom, which is on the basement level, near a family room, accommodates the teenagers in the house, as well as their friends during sleepovers. That’s why Stephanie took a lighthearted approach to the finishes, including opting for big checkerboard floor tile. “We laid it on the diagonal to really animate the room. It’s a sort of spectacle, a way of saying, ‘This is not a serious space,’” she says. The striking chromatic vanity is topped with a smoky quartz countertop. “It has a moody, club-like vibe. It also hides dirt!” says Stephanie. The sconces have a hip hotel appearance that plays to the stylized shower. “Arranging those dark grey subway tiles in vertical stacks really helps to draw the eye upward.”

SCONCES, Robinson Lighting & Bath. **TILES** (floor), Saltillo Imports; (shower), Centura. **VANITY**, Stephanie Charest Interior Design; fabrication, D&D Contracting Calgary. **COUNTER-TOP**, Omnia Quartz.